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Public Service Commission of South Carolina

Att: Docketing Dept.

P.O. Drawer 11649

Columbia, SC 29211

DB410

Reference: Docket No. 2009-489-E, letter of protest.

Dear Members:

I strongly want to protest for the SCE&G's request for an almost 10% rate hike at a time of economic struggle unparalleled since the depression. This company just increased our rates about three months ago by 5%.

My husband has been unemployed without any benefits since last year and we did not have any income for months. We are over 60 years old and cannot find jobs easy. Right now, we do not have any medical care and cannot afford to go to the doctor even if we are sick. Since November, we have been afraid to use heat in the house we are renting because we cannot afford a large bill. If you come to my house, you will see the heat off during the day and night. You will find us with three or four jackets, heavy bathrobes. At night, we sleep with four heavy blankets to keep warm. We also wear heavy socks in bed and use the hot bottles. We have the windows closed as well. Before, we take a bath we heat the water for a few minutes and turned it off.

Right now my place is 49 degrees; we cannot afford to turn the heat. A few nights the temperature went down to 25 and we turned the heat to prevent the pipes to burst. Well, our bill was increased to \$98 dollars which is more than we can pay right now. I called to find some assistance but Salvation Army and United Way did not have money. I have a bad cold but I cannot afford to have a warm place. What are we going to do with 10% increase? Nobody gets increases in wages nowadays. My friends have a furlough at work.

The cable company increased their fee from \$56 to 87 a couple months ago that is not 1%. The water bill went up as well. Gasoline still too high. We don't qualify for Medicare or Medicaid and cannot even think of seeing a doctor. I have a tumor and need a surgery but I do not have any money to do it. So, I pray and hope the tumor does not kill me soon. Without an income/ a job, it is impossible for my husband to help me or even think of a loan.

There thousands of people like us, struggling to survive day by day. Many of us are cold, sick and being bled by companies like SCE&G whose executives have high salaries and the owners have high profits. I will call them blood suckers. There is no mercy or consideration; those companies are just greedy to maximize their profits and wages.

Please stop the abuse. Stop those increases as employers stop increasing wages to the staff. Control the cost as it is a matter of survival for many of us. Why you are allowing the electrical company extra charges called "Basic Facilities charge" What is that? It is not part of the kwh rate. Also, a franchise rate which should be paid from the company's profit and not added to our bill. We are not share holders to pay franchise fees.

"SCE&G has higher rates than other investor-owned utilities" It is time for your commission to help the people and stop the blood suckers. I hope you do not approve any increase to our utilities. This is not the time and the companies should do like many of us cut down in their profits and reduce the cost instead of increase it. We are suffering to keep a group of rich investors. They are taking food from our table. It will come to decide to buy bread to eat something or pay the utilities to have some light. We spent one full night and half a day without electricity because the company uses the money to increase their profit and salaries and not to maintain the equipment.

Thank you for help us. It will be a matter of life and death for some of us.



MYKIAH JOHNS

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